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Marketing and Development Division Announces Grant Recipients

The Marketing and Development Division of the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food announced the award of five grants through the Utah's Own Acreage Enhancement Pilot Program this past week. Those receiving \$2,000 grants were; East Farms of West Point, Green River Produce of Green River, Willis Ranch of North Logan, Manzana Springs Vegetable Farm of Moab and Clifford Family Farm of Provo, all Utah farms.

"The quality of the grants made the awarding decision difficult," said Richard Sparks, Deputy Director of the Marketing and Development Division. "I was impressed by the amount of time and effort that obviously went into the preparation of the grants," he continued, "I would have like to have had adequate funding to award a grant to everyone who applied."

The grant recipients have been asked to sign a contract with UDAF to accomplish what was indicated in the grant submission. The purpose of the grant was mainly to encourage growers to take the risk of planting additional acreage into produce that could be labeled as Utah's Own and marketed to the Utah consumer. The produce could be sold directly to the consumer via Farmers Markets or sold to restaurants through food distributors.

"There is a national trend to purchase locally grown produce for a variety of reasons", said Sparks. "The freshness of locally grown produce is certainly an issue as is the saving of fossil fuels. Since locally grown produce will not have to travel hundreds of miles to reach Utah consumers it helps to save our scarce fuel resources. Perhaps, just as important, Utah consumers are beginning to see the benefit to the local economy that is derived when locally produced products are purchased."